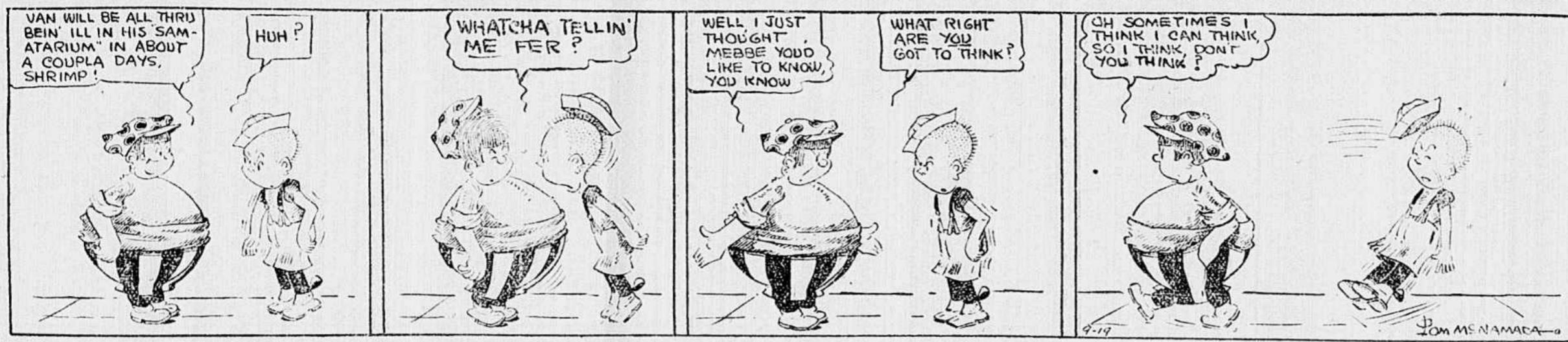


US BOYS

Skinny's Brains Are Rattling

Daily Short Story
COMPLETE IN THIS ISSUE"To Love's Own Tune."
A. M. GUTTRELL.

"This is a nice way to treat a fellow, Judith, staying away until twenty-four hours of the time set for our wedding," grumbled Bradford McIntyre, meeting the girl at the train. "I'm afraid to tell you, but I don't like it a bit."

"I'm sorry that you are angry," said Judith wearily.

Then in the privacy of the cab, he renewed his complaint. "You pleaded that you were not well, that you needed a little trip, so your Aunt Suzanne took you away. I'm beginning to see things now. You were playing for time, trying to put off our wedding again. I don't believe you because if it hadn't been for Rebecca Malone coming here to be bridesmaid and entertaining me, helping me to stop some of the confounded gossip, I'd have buckled down long ago and left town. It's been awful!"

"Poor Brad! You do get in such a stew about everything. Tomorrow night I'll be yours until death do us part," she said listlessly. "I wonder what you'll find to fuss about after that."

She was a little surprised that he had not jerked the shades down and kissed her. This would have been like him, always quarreling but always ready to make up. He pushed his foot nervously against one of the traveling bags on the floor. "Jim Ryerson, my best man, you know, and he broke his leg in a jump which I think costed him his life, if he can't serve. Bottom line, after all these months of planning! Might have known there'd be a hitch somewhere. I filled his place with an old fat brother of mine, Craig Winston, from Savannah. Hell be here in the morning."

Craig Winston from Savannah—Judith colored a little. She laid back the silk coverlet, drew around her shoulders. What queer tricks life played! It had been for that memorable month in the North Carolina mountains when she had met the young Southerner she would have been married to already, for she had been engaged to him and the date for the wedding set even then. But she had managed one evasion after another, holding off the fateful day. She could not tell Brad, it was impossible. He had always loved her.

She realized that Brad was talking again, had tried to concentrate her mind on what he was saying, but her heart was in a tumult at the blood in her body seemed to be pounding in her veins.

I wasn't sure you'd get in on this train, so I promised Rebecca Malone that wed run out into the country for some goldenrod to use in the decorations. I'd be glad when it's all over and we get home.

She nodded absently, trying to smile at him, all the time wondering what she would do when she saw Craig Winston again. She was glad that he would not be there for the rehearsal in the evening.

So the afternoon, the last, all-too-short day of rehearsal, Judith heard the grandfather clock in the hall strike seven silvery notes. Her heart had not yet adjusted to having her beloved here again by loving, clinging hands. She heard窃窃 conversations and going on the driveway doors opening and closing, excited laughter snatches of song somebody humming the wedding march.

There was the pungent smell of dry, drifting leaves in the keen September air. Judith and her father rode silently to the dimly lighted church. The bridesmaids and flower girls together in the vestibule. One of them was Judith, another one rearranged her lace cap, telling her how beautiful she was. Then at a signal, the thrilling strains of solo organ, the first bridesmaid moved slowly down the canvas-covered aisle. Judith looked down at the quivering little girl arm, told her father, time for them to go up the altar, she still kept her eyes on her daughter and only when she felt her father's comforting arm withdrawn and another one take its place did panic fill her soul when the minister asked, "Judith, do you take this man to be your lawfully wedded husband, only dry lips framed the answer. "I do."

She felt the arm on which she leaned tremble.

"Craig Winston, do you take this woman to be your lawfully wedded wife, to love, protect and cherish until death do you part?"

Judith lifted startled eyes, Craig Winston was there beside her, smiling down at her as he answered in a clear, ringing voice, "I do."

She breathed a happy little prayer. Somehow she made a happy little prayer. Something had made her feel safe.

"I promise you, husband, to love and to no man put asunder," said the minister reverently, and to the sweeping strains of Mendelssohn, Judith, happy, flushed and bright, walked step beside the man she loved.

It was the carriage going home that Craig, suddenly white and stern, told her the circumstances that had made him take Brad McIntyre's place. The train had been hours late, he told her, and Brad had met him late that afternoon. Brad had given him a lift, asking him to take it to Judith at once. He could not go on with the wedding, he had decided in a burst of passion to Craig. Judith had loved him; he was sure of that, and Belinda, a very nice girl, he had decided to go to her until the gossip died out, then he would come back and marry Belinda.

"And so," Craig continued, "I took the chance of having you denounce me at the altar, for I rushed after a license, and the bridesmaids of my great romance covered up Brad's cowardice, and went on to the church with my heart full of an overwhelming longing. When you came down the aisle with your father, I wanted to rush forward and tell you that I knew to kiss the hem of your gown. I ask nothing, nothing in return until the good God teaches me how to make you love me."

He looked away from the radiant's beautiful smile of his desire out at the ghostly branches of trees, stripped of their green, gaunt, bare, ready to meet the winter winds.

Craig's hands dropped right into Judith's. "Craig!" It was only one breathless little word. He turned quickly toward her, Craig, you know, I loved you, that last night in the moonlight when we sat out all the dances and you told me—you cared. I couldn't tell you then—I felt bound—but now—I am too happy to say anything!"

With a start, Craig clasped that slight figure in all its array of satin and perishable tulle close to a heart that throbbed with him. There was silence, except that the broken moan of the third drum of the horses feet on the asphalt. But—somewhere—a bird was singing, for always in their hearts.

The Retort Sarcastic

A lady entered in a room and took a seat in front of a newly-married couple. She was scarcely seated before they began making remarks about her. Her hair was bad and looked ugly, they noticed, with more or less stiffness on the bride's part, and there is no telling what might have come next if the lady had not made a sudden stop to the conversation on the subject. She turned her head, noticed that the bride was considerably older than the groom, and in the smoothness of tones said, "Madam, will you please ask your son to close the window behind you?"

Inadvertent Worded

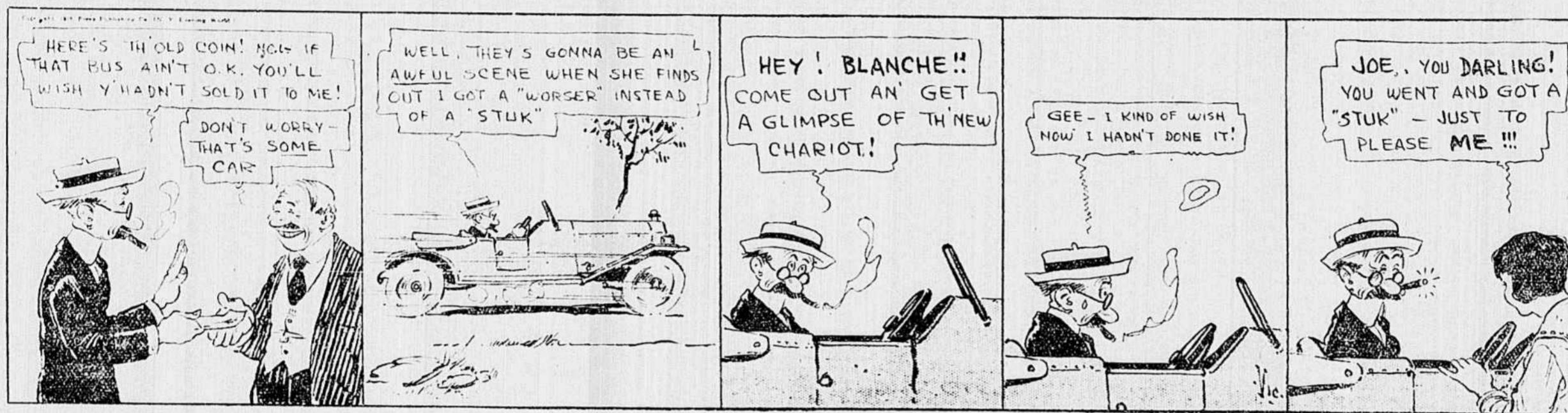
Phyllis—I think Jack is very impudent.

Annette—Why?

Phyllis—He wrote me from Africa saying he had an alligator seven feet long and when he got another he would have a pair of slippers made for me!

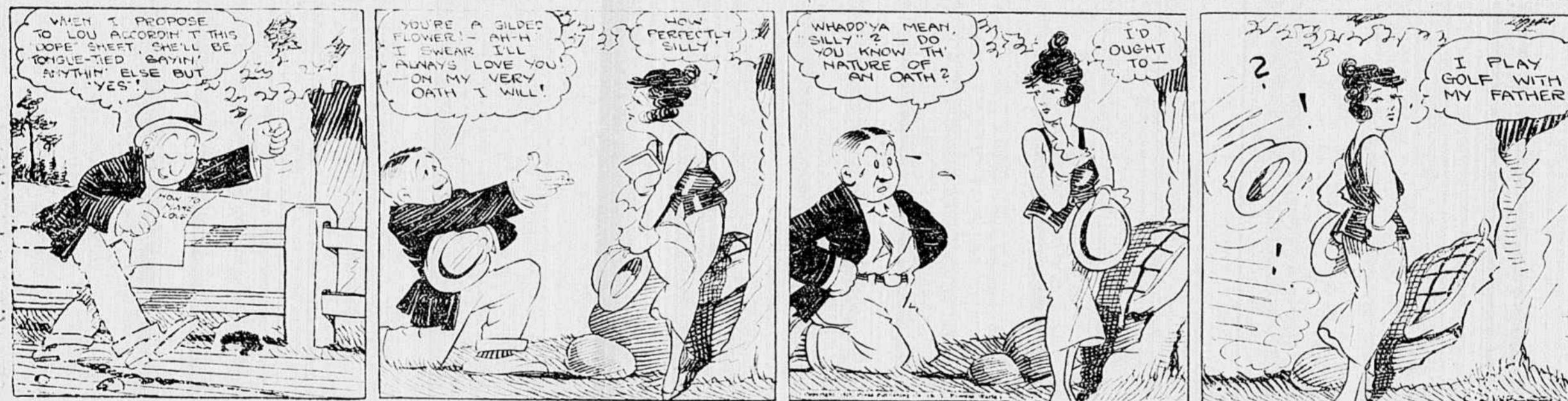
JOE'S CAR

Oh, Boy! Looks Like Joe's Going to Get Away With It



LEAVE IT TO LOU

She Spoiled His Approach



THE BIG LITTLE FAMILY

Luke Spoke From Experience



LITTLE MARY MIX-UP

Can't They Go Fifty-Fifty

